

# Feline Toxins and Poisons

In 2012, the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center answered more than 265,000 phone calls about pets exposed to poisonous substances. Below is a list of common feline toxins:

## Human or Veterinary Drugs

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin, Aleve, and Motrin/Ibuprofen/Advil, are some of the most deadly to cats. One tablet can be fatal to a cat. Cats seem to like the taste of certain antidepressants, which may contain an alluring smell or flavor in the coating. Due to their altered liver metabolism, cats have difficulty metabolizing certain drugs. Keep all medications in a secure location and seek immediate veterinary care with any accidental medication ingestion.

## Permethrin Poisoning

This occurs when pet owners apply a canine topical flea and tick medication containing Permethrin to a cat or if a cat snuggles up close to a dog that has been recently treated. These medications are highly toxic to cats, and can cause severe drooling, tremors and life-threatening seizures. Always ask your veterinarian about appropriate use of topical flea medication for your cat.

## Poisonous Plants

While it might brighten your home to bring some flowers inside during the warmer months, you might consider opting for the fake kind or make sure you research which flowers can be toxic to cats. Lilies, for example, can be most deadly to cats, as ingestion can cause severe, acute kidney failure. Small ingestions of two or three petals – even the pollen and the water in the vase – can result in potentially irreversible kidney damage. Seeking immediate veterinary care is imperative. Keep in mind that there are other plants toxic to cats.



## Insecticides, Chemicals, and Pesticides

Especially dangerous during the warmer months, exposure to insecticides can occur when a cat walks through an area recently treated with lawn and garden products, sprays, powders, or granules.

## Rodenticides

Poisons intended for rodents are extremely toxic to cats and can cause internal bleeding, neurologic signs or an overproduction of calcium which can damage the kidneys, bones, and heart.



## Household Cleaners

These include the most common household cleaners such as toilet bowl cleaners, laundry detergents, drain cleaners and carpet cleaners. Be sure to keep these products out of your cat's reach and wipe away any excess. Consult a veterinarian immediately if you believe that your cat has been exposed.

## Antifreeze

Antifreeze poisoning usually occurs when pets lick antifreeze drops or spills off the ground. Antifreeze causes acute severe kidney damage, and the antidote must be given within a few hours of exposure for it to be effective. For a cat, as little as a teaspoon can prove fatal.

## Other Poisons

While these are less obvious, other poisons such as glow sticks, jewelry, liquid potpourri, and antifreeze can be toxic to your cat. For instance, glow sticks and jewelry contain a bitter tasting liquid that can cause your cat to drool profusely. Cats are often exposed to potpourri oils by rubbing against leaky bottles or pots containing the oil, or from spilling the oil containing pots over themselves. Only a couple of licks or a small amount on the skin can be harmful, especially since cats are prolific self-groomers. In any of these cases, a trip to the veterinarian may be necessary.

Make spring a safe and enjoyable season for you and your pet by protecting them from these common feline toxins. Being proactive about your cat's health, including scheduling regular veterinary visits, provides you and your cat the peace of mind to safely bask in the spring sunlight.

## Additional Resources:

[www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control](http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control): *Animal Poison Control Center*

[www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/toxcat/toxcat.html](http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/toxcat/toxcat.html): *See a list of common feline toxins.*

